

DOINGWHATWORKS



SAMPLE MATERIAL

Walk-In Observation Form

Waterford High School, California

Topic: Turning Around Chronically Low-Performing Schools

Practice: Focus on Instruction

This observation form is used by instructional leaders (department chairs, coaches) at Waterford High School to check on alignment of teachers' instruction with the schools' instructional norms. The instructional norms are decided upon by the school's principal and staff and taught in staff professional development meetings. The observer uses the middle column to note if an instructional norm was observed and how it was implemented. For example, the first instructional norm is "Objective." According to this instructional norm, every student in the classroom should know the purpose of the lesson. The observer noted that the teacher asked the class to read out loud the purpose of the lesson written on the slide (choral response), and also sampled two students to check if they know the objective of the lesson. The right column in this observation form is used for questions for discussion during debriefing.

Following this classroom observation, the observer and teacher-observed meet for debriefing. The observer notes what was done well and recommends strategies to improve instruction. A glossary of terms is included at the bottom of the observation form.

Waterford High School
Drop-in observation
Instructional Norms

Date: 5/21/2008

Course: Algebra 1

Period: 4

Instructional Norm	Comments	Questions for Reflection
OBJECTIVE (Deconstructed from the content standard) Students know and can articulate the purpose of the lesson; this includes the skill and concept that is being taught. <i>Can the students say the objective in their own words?</i>	Solve proportions; Teacher (T) checked for understanding with popsicle sticks (2 students), and choral response (whole class).	<p>How do you decide when to use volunteers vs. non-volunteers to respond to a question?</p> <p>How does the expectation on the part of students that, when they respond "I don't know," you will come back to them affect student engagement and success?</p> <p>What strategies might you use to increase EL or other at-risk students' ability to respond to higher-order questions?</p>
TEACH FIRST then CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING The practice of teaching <i>before</i> questioning is the norm. Moreover, teachers routinely enhance student engagement by checking for understanding often mainly utilizing non-volunteers. <i>Are all students held accountable?</i>	T taught what an extraneous solution is. Regarding a subsequent example T asked "Why didn't 2 work?" (This is also a Higher-Order Thinking Question) T called on a student who did not know. T called on two other students, and then came back to the one who did not know. Non-volunteers questioned 6 times, volunteers 4 times.	
STUDENT PRODUCTION Students are expected to produce grade-level work every day in every class. This can be accomplished through assignments, guided practice and independent or group work. <i>Are the students engaged, is there production?</i>	Warm up - adding and multiplying fractions. Students were highly successful on this scaffolding skill for today's objective. Students produced throughout the observation time: Oral answers, whiteboard responses, paper and pencil.	
ALIGNMENT of INDEPENDENT PRACTICE Teachers ensure that the independent work that students are expected to complete is directly aligned with the learning objective and with the delivered instruction. <i>Were the students effectively taught to do the assigned work?</i>	Not observed	
CONCEPT DEVELOPMENT Strategic instruction designed to promote acquisition of the underlying principle or "main idea" of the learning objective. <i>Before the students leave the classroom do they know the importance of the 'main idea'?</i>	T instructs that a proportion is 2 fractions that are equal to each other. Proportions are often used to solve problems involving percents.	
MEANINGFUL INTERACTION* Student collaboration on a well-defined task designed for a specific purpose. <i>Were students given opportunity to interact?</i>	T instructs "Tell your neighbor where in real life you might use percent problems." Students pair-share, then share out. "Shopping," "Income taxes," "Stock market."	

INSTRUCTIONAL LIST

☒ Objective☒ Whiteboards☒ Guided Practice☐ Permanent Record☒ TAPPLE☒ Non-volunteers☒ Higher Order Question☒ Student Production☒ CFU☒ Elaboration, Explain, Echo☒ Modeling☐ Periodic Review☒ Re-teaching☒ Meaningful Interaction☐ Alignment☒ Concept / Importance

The above were observed in your class today. WELL DONE!

☒ Wait Time (2-5 seconds only)

GLOSSARY OF TERMS

Mission: Our purpose.

Vision: What we are striving to become.

Beliefs: Core values of our organization.

Pillars: Guiding principles.

ESLR: Expected schoolwide learning results: What graduating students are able to demonstrate.

Pursuing Excellence: Continually striving to improve collaboration, instruction, programs, analysis and operations: measurable results.

GLOSSARY OF TERMS

Instructional Tours Observation Instrument

CFU: Check(ing) For Understanding: Teachers holding all students accountable for the question. Assessment of real-time learning.TAPPLE: Teach first, Ask a specific question, Pause, Pick a non-volunteer, Listen to the response, provide Effective feedback. (Dataworks, Inc.)

WHITEBOARDS: Student use of small individual whiteboards. Teachers CFU an entire class at one time.

MODELING: Teachers demonstrating how “an expert” approaches a problem or task.

WAIT TIME: Providing adequate time for a student to process a question and provide a response. Extended time for English Language Learners.

HIGHER ORDER QUESTIONS: Questions and activities that require students to apply, synthesize, and evaluate knowledge and to create new ideas.